



# NEWSLETTER

## *An Idea So Big?*



**Council Member Cris Mendoza**

Have you ever had an idea so big, but knew that in order for it to be realized you would need help from the whole community? Well I did. When I first moved to our Town several years ago, I was proud that we were one of the few towns in our County that has remembrance ceremonies for Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Veteran's Day. Thanks to the Mayor and Council and our very supportive Town Staff, we also have one of the best National Night Outs in the County, and a very successful Black History Month celebration. My big idea was that I now wanted the Town to have a Cinco de Mayo celebration, commemorating the Battle of Puebla, Mexico against the French on May 5, 1862. I thought that this was important because there is a very large Puebla population in our area.

The problem was that I did not have any money in the budget for the proposed celebration, so I had to convince our community to help me pay for the event. I turned to all the businesses in Town for help and to my surprise many of them

quickly jumped on board. Businesses like United Rentals, Americana Grocery, Kim's Cleaners, Mexico Lindo, and House of Music helped by donating money, items, or services needed for the event. I was also very fortunate that local business leader Eloisa Guzman volunteered to help me plan the event. As always, the Mayor and Council and Town Staff were instrumental in making sure that I had the support needed to make the event happen.

The first Cinco de Mayo celebration was scheduled for Sunday May 4, 2008, and there were about six hundred residents present to share in the festivities. The community was so pleased with the event that we decided to have it every year and also decided to celebrate Mexican and Central American Independence Day in September. Both events are sponsored by our local business community, such as Megamart, La Chiquita, Radio America 1450, La Mera Mera 1050, and several other businesses. Today, each of these events is attended by over three thousand people, and has become so popular that the Mexican Consulate celebrates Cinco de Mayo and Mexican Independence Day with us every year.

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### **Contact Us**

301-927-7048  
(fax) 301-927-5257  
4229 Edmonston Rd.  
Bladensburg, MD 20710  
[www.Bladensburg.com](http://www.Bladensburg.com)

(Complete information list on back)



***So Big Continued From Page #1***

So there you have it, that's how I went from an idea in my head to making it a reality. I had to work hard to get our whole community to buy in, get people to help me pay for it, and get the people to show up and so forth. I am really pleased that it has worked out great for our Town. It is also important to note that when planning such events it doesn't hurt to have someone like Tim McNamara and very capable staff on your side. Their vast knowledge and willingness to help makes it possible to carry out such ideas. Tim and staff thanks for all your help! The support of the community, staff, and Council enabled the "big idea" come to life.

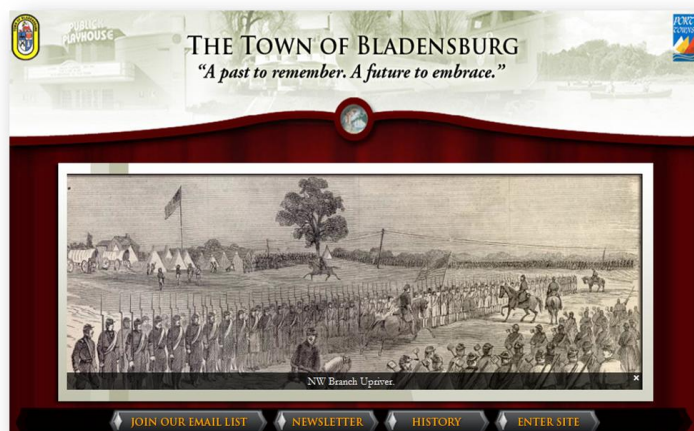
***Cris Mendoza***  
Council Member Cris Mendoza, Ward I



***Lend-A-Hand: Community Clean Up Days***

The Town is hosting community clean-up days on the **third Saturday of each month** wherein residents are encouraged to join in the effort. Residents are urged to volunteer to assist in community trash pick-up. For more information on locations and start times, please contact Town Hall at **(301) 927-7048**. Volunteers are needed! *Community service hours for school will also be certified.*

***New Town Website***



We are delighted to be able to inform you that the new Town of Bladensburg website is now live. If you call up [www.townofbladensburg.com](http://www.townofbladensburg.com) you will see that the website has a more modern look and feel and, while maintaining all of the tried and tested functions of the old site. **You may also use this site as a method to contact us about service issues as well.** You will find that there are some new features such as Facebook and Twitter that we hope you will find useful. Come and check in often as we plan to use this site to announce many Town activities and events.



***The Town of Bladensburg earns designation as a Maryland Banner City/Town.***

The Town of Bladensburg was one of few selected cities and towns in the State of Maryland to earn designation in the Maryland Municipal League's (MML) Banner City/Town Program. "MML has been a great resource for the Town of Bladensburg, and I'm proud that we are one of the municipalities to earn this designation," said Town of Bladensburg Mayor Walter L. James. There are five minimum requirements to earn the designation, including participation and support of the annual "If I Were Mayor" contest, support of Municipal Government Works Month, attendance at chapter meetings, participation in the annual convention and fall conference, and other service criteria.



## *Pepco Begins Smart Meter Deployment*



Beginning in June, the Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco) will start deploying advanced digital electric meters throughout its Maryland service area. The meter exchange program is the first phase in the utility's long-term investment to build a smart power grid that will help customers better manage their energy use and costs and improve customer service and reliability.

In August 2010, the Maryland Public Service Commission authorized Pepco to proceed with this energy upgrade, which is consistent with federal initiatives to improve energy efficiency, while reducing carbon emissions. Pepco has received \$68.85 million in federal stimulus grants to help fund Pepco's smart meter program in Maryland.

Crews will continue with the installation of the smart meters through December 2012, at which times all of Pepco's Maryland customers will have received a new meter. Prior to installation, utility customers will receive a letter and fact sheet from Pepco which, among other things, introduces them to Scope Services, the contractor that will be responsible for the devices' installation.

To learn more about Pepco's meter exchange plan, customers are encouraged to visit the Smart Grid section on Pepco's web site under Our Energy Future. Customers will find information on the new meters, a fact sheet on how to prepare for installation, and answers to frequently asked questions.



Town Elections **October 3<sup>rd</sup>**, 2011:

### ***Remember to Vote!***

Today many take for granted the freedom to hold open elections that we enjoy in America. This is not true in many countries and we should never forget how much our forefathers suffered to ensure this right for us. We encourage you to become a registered voter if you are not already and to take an active part in politics by voting in every election, Town, County, State or Federal. Remember, your vote is your voice for change. Do not let it be silent.

*If you wish to run for office for the position of Council Member or Mayor in this coming Town Election, you must be a Town resident and you must register with Ms. McAuley, Town Clerk **before August 15, 2011. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ms. McAuley at (301)-927-7048.***



**Tuesday August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 @ 6:00 pm**  
**Town Green**  
**Food, Fun Prizes .....FREE**  
**(More info 301-927-7098)**





*Bladensburg Police*

Charles L. Owens  
Chief of Police

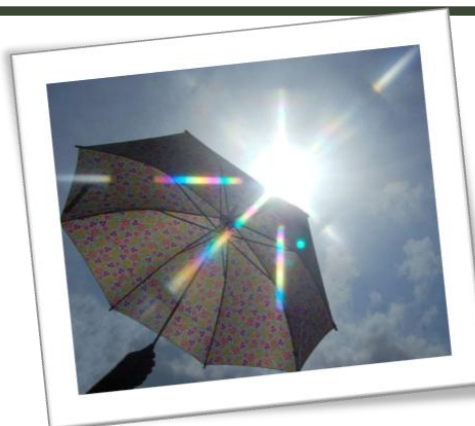
## Charles Owens Appointed Chief of Police!



*Mayor James and Chief Owens*

The Town Council appointed Charles Owens, who had been Acting Police Chief since July, to the permanent Chief on June 13th, 2011 council meeting. The Town's newly sworn Police Chief is no stranger to the community as he has served on the Town's police force for 37 years. "He has demonstrated great commitment, great leadership and great dedication to our community," said Mayor Walter James. Owens said that in the coming year he would like the department to focus on acquiring and implementing new technology such as electronic fingerprint scanning, which would allow officers to check a person's fingerprints against databases without leaving their patrol cars.

The Town of Bladensburg saw an overall drop in crime from 2010 through the first four months of this year, but saw a 1.85 percent increase in the month of May, including 18 motor vehicle thefts compared to seven in 2010. Chief Owens has stated that he is intent on making a difference in the community and improving the quality of life for all citizens.



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Summer usually means vacation time and hot weather conditions. To keep yourself safe and cool on the roads, follow these summer driving-safety tips:

1. **The summer sun can create dangerously hot temperatures in your vehicle.** Be sure to check that your air-conditioning system is functioning properly before traveling. Do not leave pets or children waiting in a car.
2. **Summer temperatures can wreak havoc on your vehicle.** Before you head out on the road, be sure to have your car serviced and inspected for safety.
3. **Check your fluid levels**, including oil, transmission, coolant, brake, power-steering, and windshield.
4. **If planning a road trip, get up-to-date maps**, and share your travel itinerary with friends and family.
5. **Make certain you tell your neighbors to look-out after your home while you are away.** Use timers and leave a contact number in which you can be reached in case of an emergency.
6. **Warmer weather heralds the start of many road-construction projects.** To safely navigate through construction zones, obey all signs and watch for pedestrians and work vehicles.
7. **When parked, use a sun shield underneath the windshield** to keep heat to a minimum and to protect your vehicle's interior.
8. **The end of summer signals the start of school.** Be aware of children playing.



*Chris and Marie Needham*



*William "Bill" Hickey*



*Francis (Francisco) Salveron*

## **Proud to be Bladensburg Residents!**

### ***MOM AND CHRIS***

***By Danny Needham***

Marie and Chris Needham were residents of Bladensburg since 1958. Marie was always involved as she was Room Mother in her early years while her kids were in school. She assisted with many facets such as going on trips. She was also Den Mother for the Cub Scouts. As Chris got older he became more involved in Town functions. Both Marie and Chris were members of the Recreation Council, at different times. Marie in the 70's and 80's and Chris in the 2000's. They both served as election judges. Chris also assisted with the Seniors' dance and could often be heard speaking at different functions, Such as Memorial Day, Veterans' Day, Fourth of July. He and Marie tried to show their support by attending every function they could. Outside of Bladensburg both were involved in their Church and Chris was also active in the American Legion Post 131 as Commander of the SAL. In the latter years their Church, Family, Town and American Legion was most important to them. Chris Needham passed away December 24, 2007 and Marie Needham passed away August 11, 2010. They died proud to be Bladensburg residents.

### ***Duty, Honor, Country***

**Mr. "Bill" Hickey**, a long time Bladensburg resident, served during World War II, in the US Navy, assigned to Amphibious Forces as Electricians Mate First Class with service in the Asiatic- Pacific Theater. After wartime service he became a member of the Irish War Veterans attaining the rank of Post Commander and then National Commander. Bill was a member of the American Legion, VFW National Honor Guard, and also served as Post Commander of the VFW. Some highlights of Bill's career were meeting President Lyndon Johnson at the White House in 1966 when he signed the GI Bill for Vietnam Veterans, as a member of the Reception Committee for General Douglas MacArthur when he returned to the U.S. from the Pacific, as a member of the Electoral College of the State of Maryland in 1980, and the Unveiling and Dedication of the Korean-Vietnam Memorial in Bladensburg.

***Duty Continued on page 6***

HOMETOWN

HEROES



*Duty Continued from page 5*

**Mr. Francis Salveron** joined the US Army in December 1941 and from February 1942 until his discharge in June 1945 he was Personal Aide (*by request*) to General Douglas MacArthur. He re-enlisted the US Air Force December 1945 and was assigned to the aircraft of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, later to the aircraft of the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of State, retired from the Air Force August 1963. He received number of Decorations and Awards, including the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Presidential Distinguished Citation with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, (3 times) Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with 1 Arrow Head and 10 Bronze stars, 5,000 Hour Accident Free Award, Philippine Liberation with 2 Bronze stars, and the Korean Service Medal. In 1972-1974 he served as Commander the General Vicente Lim Post 5471 VFW and in 1975 founded General of the Army Douglas MacArthur Memorial Post 983 serving as Commander to the present time. On January 15, 1983 he was awarded Outstanding Senior Citizen Award of the George's County by Prince George's County Jaycees t on February 15, 1983 awarded the Outstanding Senior citizen Award of the State of Maryland by the Maryland Jaycees. He was also a member of the Bladensburg Promotion Committee and is involved in other community activities.



***“In every community there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart there is the power to do it.” ~***

***Marianne Williamson***



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Please Join Us as we Commemorate and Remember our Proud Americans and Bladensburg Residents.

**July 4th**

William Hickey  
Marie Needham  
Chris Needham  
Francis Salveron

11:00 @  
The Peace Cross  
More Information  
(301) 927-7048





*Winners of "What The Flag Means to Me" with the Mayor and Council, Mexican Consulate Gomez, and Former Council Member Hoffman.*



### ***"What the Flag Means to Me"***

The American flag means something to everyone. To some it means a chance to live the way they dreamed about. To others it means that they have rights that can never be taken away from them.

Many years ago, then Council member Marion Hoffman instituted an essay contest open to all Town of Bladensburg students. The essay's theme was: "What the American Flag Means to Me." Type-written essays were submitted to the Town Clerk's Office by early June and included the writer's name, address, age, and a phone number. The contest winners were given the opportunity to present the essay during the televised Town Council meeting. The project, coordinated with the Bladensburg, Port Towns, Rogers Heights and Templeton Elementary schools supported the educational goals of history, writing, and logical thought. Moreover, it served to establish the Flag as a standing symbol of freedom and opportunity. As proud Americans who always lived here or those who are recent arrivals and newly call this home; may we long honor our Nation's symbol, not just this Flag Day, but every day.

## **Calendar**

### **Worksessions**

Second Monday of every month, 5:30 p.m.  
(excluding holidays)

### **Council Meetings**

Second Monday of every month, 7:00 p.m.

### **Seniors' Club**

Town Hall, 10 a.m., 2nd and 4th Thursdays of every month

### **Bulk Trash/ Town Clean-up**

3rd Saturday of every month. **Please call (301) 927-7048** by noon the Friday before.

### **Neighborhood Watch**

Every Friday, 7:00 p.m.  
Call 301-927-8126 for info.

### **CERTS Meetings**

Second Saturday of every month, 9:00 a.m.  
Call 301-927-8126 for info.

*Town of Bladensburg  
4229 Edmonston Road  
Bladensburg, MD 20710*

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## RESIDENT

*Bladensburg, Maryland  
20710*



*Mexican Consulate Gomez (Center) with Council Members George and Watson (far left) and Mayor James and Council Member Ficklin (far right)*

## Around Town

### **The Mexican Consulate Comes to Bladensburg**

As the Town of Bladensburg is becoming more diverse, we are always open to extending our warm Town hospitality to those new to the area. On one such occasion we were visited by the Mexican Consulate, Mr. Gomez, during our celebration of Mexican Independence day. He was so enthused with our community's welcoming spirit; he has returned numerous times and enjoyed several community festivals and commemorative events.

### Contact Information

#### **Mayor**

Walter James .....301-452-7560

#### **Council Members Ward I**

Cris Mendoza .....240-604-6349

Charlina Watson .....301-437-7197

#### **Council Members Ward II**

Walter Ficklin .....301-792-8199

Walter George .....301-379-4774

#### **Administrative Offices**

301-927-7048

#### **Code Enforcement**

301-927-0330

#### **Police Department**

301-864-6080

#### **Public Works**

301-927-1452

*"Responsible and Responsive Government"*